

City of San Jose

Park Ranger Application and  
Interview Preparation



Department of Parks, Recreation  
and Neighborhood Services

# City of San Jose

Mayor

Sam Liccardo

## Council Members

District 1 – Charles Jones

District 2 – Ash Kalra

District 3 – Raul Peralez

District 4 – Manh Nguyen

District 5 – Magdalena Carrasco

District 6 – Pierluigi Oliverio

District 7 – Tam Nguyen

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District 9 – Donald Rocha

District 10 – Johnny Khamis

City Manager

Norberto Duenas

Director, Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood  
Services

Angel Rios Jr.

Deputy Director, Parks Division

Steve Hammack

# Mission Statements

## **City of San Jose Mission Statement**

*The Mission of the City of San José is to provide quality public services, facilities and opportunities that create, sustain and enhance a safe, livable and vibrant community for its diverse residents, businesses and visitors.*

## **Parks and Recreation Mission Statement**

*Support livability of neighborhoods, offer opportunities for individuals to enjoy life, and strengthen communities of people*

## **Parks and Recreation Vision**

*Communities of people connected by play, hope and joy in life*

## **San José Park Ranger Program Mission Statement**

*The Mission of the Park Ranger Program is to provide a safe, enjoyable park experience by protecting and educating the public; by providing recreational opportunities; and by protecting, preserving and enhancing the natural and cultural resources of the City's Parks, trails and open spaces.*

# Organizational Values



Values represent, motivate, and cultivate the City of San José workforce. They describe what is most important to us and serve as the foundation for how our organization operates. The employees of the City of San José are the backbone of our organization.

# San Jose Park Ranger Program

The San Jose Park Ranger program was established in 1972 to address the concerns of City residents related to the safety and management of San Jose's rapidly growing park system.

San Jose Park Rangers are generalist rangers and are responsible for the day to day operation of the City's regional parks, public safety patrols of our expanding trail system, protecting and restoring our City watersheds, and providing ranger services in community and neighborhood parks when required.

San Jose's Park Rangers provide a wide range of services to the community in key elements such as Visitor Services and Public Safety, Resource Management and Protection, Interpretation, Volunteer Management and Support, and Park Maintenance.

San Jose Park Rangers hold Visitor Service as our most important responsibility. The Department recognizes that public service and stewardship of the public trust is the core of ALL of the Park Ranger programs services.

# Park Ranger Application Preparation

## **Preparation**

### ☐ **Beginning the Application Process**

- Review the application and supplemental questions
  - Collect all of your relevant documents, transcripts and certifications
  - Volunteer time counts! If volunteer work provides applicable job skills and experience, calculate your total number of hours volunteered to the organization.
- Draft your responses to the supplemental questions in a word document
  - Be thorough, concise and complete in your answers
  - Include total number of hours worked or volunteered with your experience.
  - Have your answers proof read by a friend
  - Spelling, grammar and punctuation counts

### ☐ **Completing Your Application**

- Be thorough and complete.
  - Answer all questions.
  - List all of your relevant jobs, both paid and volunteer.
  - Cut and paste your completed supplemental questions into the space provided.
  - Save your work often, as you work on your application.
  - Internet Explorer is recommended during the application process.
  - List the expiration and/or issue date for any professional certifications.
  - List any relevant professional organizations you belong to.
- Your resume
  - A resume is optional and may be attached during the application process.
  - The review panel will not see your resume until the end of the hiring process.
  - Make sure all relevant information from your resume is on your application.

## **Submitting Your Application**

### ☐ **Before You Submit**

- Review the application and supplemental questions for completeness.
- ❑ **After Submission**
  - The City default method of communication is by e-mail.
    - Check your e-mail regularly and check your “spam” folder.

# Park Ranger

## Oral Interview Preparation

### Preparation

- ❑ **Pre-Interview**
  - Where is the interview being held?
    - What are the routes to drive there?
    - How long will it take at the time of my test?
  - Where should I park?
    - How much will it cost? Are parking permits provided?
    - Are there alternative methods of transportation?
- ❑ **Research The Following:**
  - The agency I am testing for i.e.;
    - Agency head
    - Overall agency size/number and type of parks
    - Mission statement
    - Specialized units
    - Notable achievements of the agency
  - The community I am going to serve i.e.;
    - Population size
    - Demographics
    - Notable achievements
- ❑ **Personal Preparation**
  - Appearance
    - A suit or business attire are the best choices
    - Grooming to law enforcement standards
    - Attention to detail

# Park Ranger Oral Interview Preparation

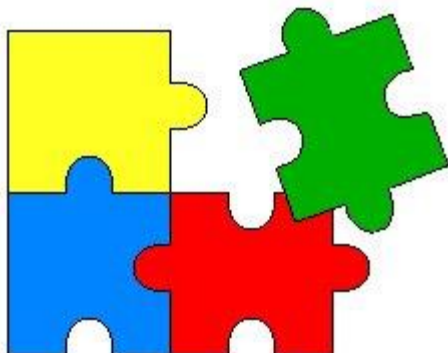
## Answering questions

### ❑ The Keys to Success

- Respond to all the questions
- Remember, the panel can only score you on what you say, not the information on your application or resume
- Use appropriate voice inflection, tone and volume
- Be clear, concise, complete and correct
- Answer chronologically if appropriate
- Be prepared by rehearsing standard questions
- At the end of your response, restate the question to add to your confidence and to let the panel know you are finished responding. i.e *“And that is some of what I know about the San Jose Parks Department.”*

### ❑ Sample Standard Questions

- 1) Tell us about yourself
- 2) What do you know about the San Jose Park Ranger Program?
- 3) Why do you want to work for the City of San Jose?
- 4) Define loyalty and give us an example.
- 5) What are the character traits every park ranger should possess?
- 6) Give us an example of a time when you had to use judgment.
- 7) What have you done to prepare for a career in park management?
- 8) What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- 9) Do you have anything to add?



Like pieces of a puzzle, you simply need to find the way to present your responses in a chronological and orderly manner.



***PRACTICE!***

# Park Ranger Oral Interview Preparation

## **Closing statement**

- ☐ Highlight the things you want them to remember
- ☐ Add important facts you did not have an opportunity to add
- ☐ Experience, education, training, and character traits are important things to ensure the panel hears
- ☐ Keep your statement at about 1 to 2 minutes